

SENATE OF VIRGINIA

J. CHAPMAN PETERSEN
34TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT
ALL OF THE CITY OF FAIRFAX;
AND PART OF FAIRFAX COUNTY
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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
COURTS OF JUSTICE
GENERAL LAWS AND TECHNOLOGY
PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

March 9, 2010

The Honorable Robert McDonnell
Governor of Virginia
Third Floor – Patrick Henry Building
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor McDonnell:

We are legislators representing the "outside the Beltway" neighborhoods that border Interstate 66 in Fairfax and Prince William Counties. We are writing specifically to encourage your administration to develop a dedicated bus service within this corridor in order to alleviate in the short term the severe traffic congestion along I-66 in northern Virginia.

Here is a brief history and summary of our position:

In 1999, the I-66 corridor was the subject of an "MIS" study by the Virginia Department of Transportation which found the need for substantial improvements, including extension of the Orange Line Metrorail, in order to improve traffic flow and ease congestion. For various reasons, those recommendations were not acted upon and traffic along I-66 continued to worsen. With the recent "HOT Lanes" construction near the junction of I-66 and I-495 in Dunn Loring, the traffic on this corridor has become intolerable.

Recently, VDOT has been planning to re-open the "MIS" recommendations, which are now eleven years old, and proceed with a formal Environmental Impact Statement or "EIS" on their feasibility. While we support this process, history has shown that it will move at a glacial pace. Furthermore, there is no funding currently available to take on a cost-intensive project such as extending the Orange Line fixed rail system.

Our constituents need traffic relief now. Currently, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transport is undertaking a "Transit/TDM Study" for the I-66 corridor. This study is looking at solutions that we can utilize in the near term.

This study has identified bus rapid transit or "BRT" as "a low cost precursor to rail" outside the Beltway. We agree. A rapid bus system could be staged at various convenient locations along the I-66 corridor. It could use the existing dedicated lanes for HOV usage or right-of-way

created for the Orange Line extension. Finally, it could tap into the enormous demand for transit in the I-66 corridor. All this could be done at a fraction of the cost required for fixed rail.

There will be some costs with this new program. VDRPT estimates that approximately \$250 million will be required to develop new "priority" bus stations and establish the bus service. While a significant sum of money, this is far less than major projects for similar transit corridors. Such a system could potentially be fully operational within a few years.

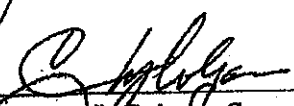
In summary, we strongly encourage your administration to investigate this low-cost option for transit as soon as possible. We would also encourage your administration to undertake an open process to bring in outside contractors with innovative solutions for this project, which could be a national example for cost-efficient mass transit.

Thank you again for considering our position. We look forward to working with VDOT and VDRPT on these critical issues for our commuting public.

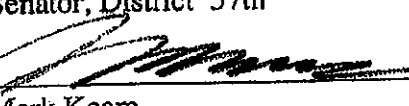
Thank you.

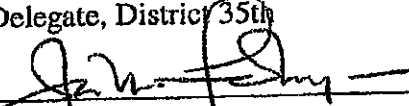
Sincerely,

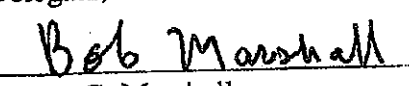

J. Chapman Petersen
Member, Senate of Virginia

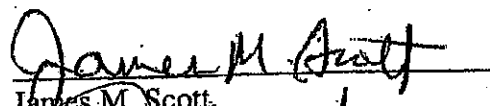

Charles J. Colgan, Sr.
Senator, District 29th President Pro Tem

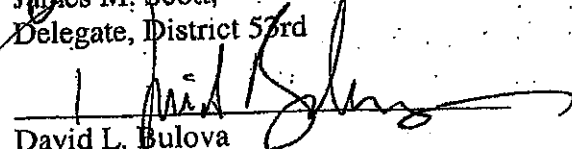

Dave W. Marsden
Senator, District 37th

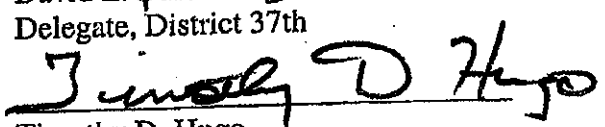

Mark Keam
Delegate, District 35th

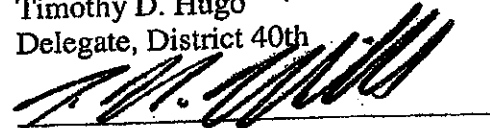

James M. LeMunyon
Delegate, District 67th


Robert G. Marshall
Delegate, District 13th


James M. Scott,
Delegate, District 53rd


David L. Bulova
Delegate, District 37th


Timothy D. Hugo
Delegate, District 40th


Jackson Miller
Delegate, District 50th